

Bruce A Timmons
October 6, 2015

The Honorable Peter Pettalia, Chair, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Members of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Re: **HB 4423** (Rep. Jacobsen) - Traffic control; speed restrictions; modify speed limit law.

As the Committee considers this package on "adjusting" (mostly increasing) speed limits on Michigan freeways, highways, county roads, and local streets, please give due consideration to the following:

- A key factor in highway safety is avoidance of large speed differentials – between slower and faster drivers. Not all of us feel comfortable driving 70 mph at times now, much less speeds up to 80 mph, which could translate to 85 mph (or above) with drivers aware that radar tends to be set 5-10 mph above the set limit. A prescribed speed limit of 80 mph for rural limited access highways could worsen the speed differential between 55 mph and 80 (or above).
- Commercial trucks have a current maximum speed limit of 60 mph but the typical speed of semis is 68 mph, not 60. Have you ever seen a truck stopped for speeding? One can argue that a truck driving at 68 mph reduces speed differentials on freeways and avoids congestion caused by 'slower moving vehicles' that a truck at 60 mph could cause.
- However, if rural freeway speeds increase to 80 mph, will the new typical truck speed become 78 mph? If not, will the result be greater undesired speed differentials? How would this proposal affect the notorious I-94 stretch between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo where excess speed is frequently cited for crashes in that stretch, such as the major pile-up last winter?
- There is one law you cannot amend or repeal – the law of physics. Vehicles at higher speeds require a greater distance to stop. Human reflexes do not increase proportionate to the speed of the vehicle. Collisions involving vehicles (esp. semis) at higher speeds will be more catastrophic with greater damage to property and injury to individuals.
- Michigan freeways were designed and built to specifications for maximum speeds of 70 mph. Ramps between many freeways were designed for 70 mph, not 80 mph. Those ramps would require new signs. If 80 mph is allowed, will that also kick-in higher and more expensive freeway construction costs? Are we willing to pay that price?

Thank you for allowing me to submit this statement in opposition to HB 4423.

Respectfully,



Bruce A. Timmons
Okemos MI

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